It is retained by the Dispensatories as an ingredient in several preparations, particularly the compound decoction of guaiacum, formerly called "decoction of the woods;" and the compound decoction of Sarsaparilla, formerly the "Lisbon diet drink." These preparations are useful as sudorifics in rheumatism, some cutaneous diseases, and the sequelæ of syphilis. They derive, however, more of their efficacy from their other ingredients, than from the Sassafras, a principal part of the efficacy of which is dissipated by boiling.

The most proper mode of employing the Sassafras is in the form of its volatile oil, which may be given in very small quantities as an antispasmodic, stimulant and sudorific. It is too acrid to be taken unmixed, and should therefore be dissolved in spirit and mixed with water or syrup.

The mucilage of the pith of this tree is peculiarly mild and lubricating, and has been used with much benefit in dysentery, and in catarrhal, as well as calculous affections. Some eminent surgeons have employed it as a lotion in the most inflammatory stages of ophthalmia, to which its softness renders it extremely well suited.

The wood of the Sassafras tree is of a light texture, but is said to be durable when exposed

to the weather. It has been thought capable of repelling insects by its odour, and on this account has been employed for trunks, bedsteads, &c. A property of this kind, however, is wrongly attributed to it, since the wood retains scarcely any odour after a few months drying.

BOTANICAL REFERENCES.

Laurus Sassafras, Linn. *Sp. pl.*—Pursh, i. 277.—Nuttall, i. 259.—Woodville, iv. *t.* 234.—Michaux, fil. *Arbres forestiers*, iii. 173.—Laurus foliis integris, trilobisve.—Trew, *Ehr.* *t.* 69, 70.—Cornus mas odorata, &c.—Plukenet, *Alm.* 120, *t.* 222.—Catesby, *Car.* i. *t.* 55.

MEDICAL REFERENCES.

Murray, *Apparatus*, iv. 535.—Kalm, *travels*, ii.—Hoffman *Obs. Phys. Chem.* 31.—Cullen, *Mat. Med.* ii. 200.—Clayton, *Phil. Trans. Abr.* viii. 332.—Bremane, *Sassafrasologia* in 1627.

PLATE XXXV.

Fig. 1. *Laurus Sassafras, a branch with perfect flowers of the natural size.*
Fig. 2. *A stamen magnified.*
Fig. 3. *Pistil, ditto.*
Fig. 4. *Fruit.*

JACOB BIGELOW *American Medical Botany* BOSTON, 1817-1820 CARY GRAPHIC ARTS COLLECTION, ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY Octavo